

Message Text

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43

ACTION SS-30

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O 171300Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8360

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL ASMARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 1429

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS CASC ET

SUBJ: TENNECO SIX

REF: KHARTOUM 1380

1. KHALIFA CONTACTED EMBOFF JUNE 16 TO PASS ON DETAILS ZEIN'S LATEST TELEGRAPHIC MESSAGE TO HIM SENT JUNE 15. MESSAGE ASSERTED NURSE WILL BE RELEASED SOON IN GHINDA AREA. ELF REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING RELEASE OF PILOT BY MOVING HIM CLOSER TO SUDANESE BORDER. ZIN EXPLAINED DELAY PILOT RELEASE BY STATING A LOT OF WALKING INVOLVED.

2. ZEIN MESSAGE ALSO INFORMED THAT ORIGINALLY ELF REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL PLANNED RELEASE OF NURSE ONLY AND HOLD PILOT UNTIL WORD WAS RECEIVED ON PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS (SIC) RE RELEASE FIVE ELF PRISONERS HELD BY IEG. HOWEVER, WHEN KHALIFA'S STRONGLY WORDED MESSAGE, PARA 2 AND 3 REFTEL, ARRIVED, REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL DECIDED TO COMPLY AND RELEASE PILOT AS WELL.

3. EMBOFF APPRISED KHALIFA OF THE MORGHANI LETTERS (FACSIMILES WERE RECEIVED BY EMBASSY LATE IN DAY) AND CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO MRS. DORTZBACH. KHALIFA STATED THAT ZEIN CALLED MORGHANI A CROOK WHO IS TRYING TO MAKE MONEY. ZEIN HAD ALSO PREVIOUSLY INDICATED TO

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KHALIFA THAT MRS. DORTZBACH WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM GROUP THAT CAPTURED

HER AND PUT UNDER THE CONTROL OF ELF CENTRAL AUTHORITIES. KHALIFA OPINED THAT GROUP WRITING MR. KARL DORTZBACH COULD BE ATTEMPTING EXPLOIT THE SITUATION FOR PERSONAL GAIN AND MIGHT NOT HAVE HER IN CUSTODY.

4. KHALIFA STATED THERE ABSOLUTELY NO QUESTION THAT ORIGINAL TENNECO FIVE ARE IN THE HANDS OF "ZEINS PEOPLE". (FYI: KHALIFA STATED IN CONFIDENCE THAT HE HAD MET WITH LEADERS OF ELF/GC SUCH AS IDRIS AND ADOM WHEN SUDAN WAS HELPING THE ELF. THESE ELF/GC LEADERS STILL HOPE TO RECEIVE SIMILAR MEASURE OF CLANDESTINE SUPPORT IN FUTURE FROM SUDAN AND THEREFORE WOULD TEND TO BE RESPONSIVE TO KHALIFA'S MESSAGES. END FYI).

5. KHALIFA BELIEVES THAT MRS. DORTZBACH AND PILOT GRANT WERE CAPTURED BY ANOTHER GROUP WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION ELF/GC LEADERS. HE HAS NO EVIDENCE THAT ZEIN'S SUPERIORS (I.E., ELF/CG LEADERS) HAVE NOW GAINED CONTROL OVER THE GROUP HOLDING MRS. DORTZBACH BUT HE BELIEVES ZEIN IS TRUTHFUL AND THAT ATTEMPTS BY ZEIN SUPERIORS GAIN CUSTODY OVER MRS. DORTZBACH EITHER ALREADY ACHIEVED OR IN PROCESS OF COMPLETION. (FYI THIS COULD EXPLAIN CREDIBILITY GAP BETWEEN ZEIN'S ASSERTION AND ELF PERFORMANCE SO FAR. END FYI)

6. KHALIFA STATED THAT HE HAS SENT ZEIN A SECOND MESSAGE ACKNOWLEDGING HIS TELEGRAM OF JUNE 15 AND ASKING CLARIFICATION SITUATION INCLUDING MORGHANI INITIATIVE.

7. IN ADDITION TO ABOVE, KHALIFA WAS IN CONTACT ON JUNE 16 WITH IMPORTANT ELF/GC MEMBER SALAH YAY OR YEI WHO IS TRANSITTING SUDAN FROM ADEN TO ERITREA TO TAKE PART IN MAJOR ELF CONFERENCE NEXT WEEK (PARA 4 REFTTEL). KHALIFA SHFESSED TO SALAH NEED FOR ELF/GC RELEASE PILOT AND NURSE TO RE-ESTABLISH GOOD FAITH. SALAH CONCURED AND AGREED TO ADD HIS WEIGHT TO THOSE COUNSELLING THEIR EARLY RELEASE.

8. COMMENT: IN LIGHT OF KHALIFA'S ADMISSION TO HAVING SOME INFLUENCE ON ELF LEADERSHIP, AS WELL AS ZEIN'S CONTINUING MESSAGES, BELIEVE ZEIN CHANNEL AT THIS TAGE STILL USEFUL. WE PLAN TELL KHALIFA WE NOW HAVE FACSIMILES MORGHANI LETTERS BUT ARE INCLINED BELIEVE THEY SHOULD BE RETAINED BY EMBASSY TO BE SHOWN ZEIN SHOULD CONFIDENTIAL

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HE RETURN HERE. AT THAT TIME WE WOULD URGE GRAHAM RETURN TO RENEW

DIRECT TENNECO CONTACT. MEANWHILE KHALIFA'S INITIATIVES (PARA 5 AND 6 ABOVE) STRENGTHEN OUR VIEW NO USEFUL PURPOSE WOULD BE SERVED BY DIRECT APPEAL PRESIDENT NIMEIRI AT THIS STAGE. AS PREVIOUSLY INDICATED, BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL IEG SHOULD BE PREPARED WITH SOME PRIVATE AND INDIRECT ASSURANCES RE THEIR ELF CAPTIVES, SHOULD TWO HOSTAGES BY RELEASED. LASTLY, DEVELOPMENTS

REPORTED ABOVE SUGGEST CONTINUING DESIRABILITY NO FURTHER TENNECO
PRESS STATEMENTS FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE.
BREWER

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